

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON RUIRU-JUJA WATER AND SEWERAGE COMPANY LIMITED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2023

PREAMBLE

I draw your attention to the contents of my report which is in three parts:

- A. Report on the Financial Statements that considers whether the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework, accounting standards and the relevant laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the financial statements.
- B. Report on Lawfulness and Effectiveness in Use of Public Resources which considers compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, gazette notices, circulars, guidelines and manuals and whether public resources are applied in a prudent, efficient, economic, transparent and accountable manner to ensure Government achieves value for money and that such funds are applied for the intended purpose.
- C. Report on Effectiveness of Internal Controls, Risk Management and Governance which considers how the entity has instituted checks and balances to guide internal operations. This responds to the effectiveness of the governance structure, the risk management environment and the internal controls, developed and implemented by those charged with governance for orderly, efficient and effective operations of the entity.

An unmodified opinion does not necessarily mean that an entity has complied with all relevant laws and regulations and that its internal controls, risk management and governance systems are properly designed and were working effectively in the financial year under review.

The three parts of the report are aimed at addressing the statutory roles and responsibilities of the Auditor-General as provided by Article 229 of the Constitution, the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and the Public Audit Act, 2015. The three parts of the report, when read together constitute the report of the Auditor-General.

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Qualified Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Ruiru-Juja Water and Sewerage Company Limited set out on pages 1 to 31, which comprise of the statement of financial position as at 30 June, 2023, and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and the statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information in accordance with the provisions of Article 229 of the Constitution of Kenya and Section 35 of the Public Audit Act, 2015. I have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of the audit.

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion section of my report, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Ruiru-Juja Water and Sewerage Company Limited as at 30 June, 2023, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and comply with the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, the Companies Act, 2015, and the Water Act, 2016.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

Irregularities in Board Expenses

The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income reflects Board expenses amount of Kshs.8,718,341 as disclosed in Note 14 to the financial statements. Review of the provided records revealed that the Company held twenty (20) Board meetings instead of a maximum of four (4) in a year and two special meetings. As a result, an expenditure of Kshs.2,800,000 was incurred to remunerate the Board members irregularly. The two special meetings had no approval from the County Executive Committee Member (CECM). Further, the Board did not submit their annual plan to their parent department at the County Government as required.

In addition, out of the twenty (20) meetings held by the Board, eleven (11) of them were held outside the Company's premises contrary to the directive given by the Government. This led to loss of funds in payment for venues considering the Company has a Board room within its premises. There was also no performance evaluation carried out on the Board hence the performance of the Board members could not be established. It was further noted that three (3) Board members received thirty-eight (38) payments totaling to Kshs.2,240,000. Management did not provide any justification for the amount paid.

In the circumstances, the validity and accuracy of the Board expenses of Kshs.8,718,341 could not be confirmed.

The audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). I am independent of the Ruiru-Juja Water and Sewerage Company Limited Management in accordance with ISSAI 130 on Code of Ethics. I have fulfilled other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the ISSAI and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in Kenya. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my qualified opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgment, are of most significance in the audit of the financial statements. There were no key audit matters to report in the year under review.

Other Matter

Unresolved Prior Year Matters

In the audit report of the previous year, several issues were raised. However, Management has not resolved the issues or given any explanation for failure to adhere to the provisions of the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board templates.

REPORT ON LAWFULNESS AND EFFECTIVENESS IN USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES

Conclusion

As required by Article 229(6) of the Constitution, based on the audit procedures performed, except for the matters described in the Basis for Conclusion on Lawfulness and Effectiveness in Use of Public Resources section of my report, I confirm that, nothing else has come to my attention to cause me to believe that public resources have not been applied lawfully and in an effective way.

Basis for Conclusion

1. Unaccounted for Non-Revenue Water (NRW)

The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income and as disclosed in Note 6 to the financial statements reflects operating revenue from water sales of Kshs.979,425,268. Records provided for audit revealed that the Company produced a total of 13,179,010 cubic meters (m³) of water. However, only 8,140,218 cubic meters were billed to customers. The balance of 5,038,792 cubic meters, which is approximately 36% of the total water produced with a sale value of Kshs.387,986,984, at the average sale price of Kshs.77 per cubic meter represents the Non-Revenue Water (NRW).

In the circumstances, the Company significantly exceeded the allowable NRW loss of 25% by 11% or approximately Kshs.39,190,636 which if not addressed will negatively impact on the Company's profitability and its long-term sustainability.

2. Use of Expired Tariff

The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income and Note 6 to the financial statements reflects operating revenue from water sales amount of Kshs.979,425,268. However, during the year under review, Management billed water to customers using an expired tariff running from 2015/2016 to 2017/2018. No explanation or evidence was provided indicating that the Management sought extension of the approved rates billed to water customers during the financial year under review. This was contrary to Section 72(1)(b) of the Water Act, 2016 which states that the powers and functions of the Regulatory Board is to evaluate and recommend water and sewerage tariffs to the County water services providers and approve the imposition of such tariffs in line with customer protection standards.

In the circumstances, Management was in breach of the law.

The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 4000. The standard requires that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance, in all material respects, with the authorities that govern them. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS, RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Conclusion

As required by Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015, based on the audit procedures performed, I confirm that, nothing has come to my attention to cause me to believe that internal controls, risk management and overall governance were not effective.

Basis for Conclusion

Lack of Functioning of the Internal Audit Function

Review of the internal audit function revealed that the Internal Audit Department was understaffed and not adequately facilitated as there was no clear budget line including staffing and training. It is therefore doubtful whether it has the capacity to accomplish its internal audit responsibilities.

In the circumstances, the existence of an effective mechanism to ensure proper internal control system could not be confirmed.

The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 2315 and ISSAI 2330. The standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether effective processes and systems of internal control, risk management and overall governance were operating effectively, in all material respects. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

REPORT ON OTHER LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

As required by the Companies Act, 2015, I report based on my audit, that:

- i. I have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of the audit;
- ii. In my opinion, adequate accounting records have been kept by the Company, so far as appears from the examination of those records; and,

- iii. The Company's financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records and returns.

Responsibilities of Management and the Board of Directors

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and for maintaining effective internal control as Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and for its assessment of the effectiveness of internal control, risk management and overall governance.

In preparing the financial statements, Management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless Management is aware of the intention to liquidate the Company or to cease operations.

Management is also responsible for the submission of the financial statements to the Auditor-General in accordance with the provisions of Section 47 of the Public Audit Act, 2015.

In addition to the responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements described above, Management is also responsible for ensuring that the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities which govern them, and that public resources are applied in an effective way.

The Board of Directors are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process, reviewing the effectiveness of how Management monitors compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, ensuring that effective processes and systems are in place to address key roles and responsibilities in relation to overall governance and risk management, and ensuring the adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.

Auditor-General's Responsibilities for the Audit

The audit objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs will always detect a material misstatement and weakness when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

In addition to the audit of the financial statements, a compliance audit is planned and performed to express a conclusion about whether, in all material respects, the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities that govern them, and that public resources are applied in an effective way, in accordance with the provisions of Article 229(6) of the Constitution and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution.

Further, in planning and performing the audit of the financial statements and audit of compliance, I consider internal control in order to give an assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and overall governance processes and systems in accordance with the provisions of Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. My consideration of the internal control would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses under the ISSAIs. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control may not prevent or detect misstatements and instances of non-compliance. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the Company policies and procedures may deteriorate.

As part of an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by Management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of Management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in the auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my audit report.

However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information and business activities of the Company to express an opinion on the financial statements.
- Perform such other procedures as I consider necessary in the circumstances.

I communicate with Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that are identified during the audit.

I also provide Management with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence and where applicable, related safeguards.



FCPA Nancy Gathungu, CBS
AUDITOR-GENERAL

Nairobi

03 May, 2024